

OCT 28 – NOV 3



# National Wildlife Federation Campaigns Field Report

Affiliate partners and outreach consultants across the country are working with NWF's Campaigns team to advance shared federal conservation policy goals around climate change, sustainable agriculture, conservation funding, public lands, and clean water. Here are a few recent activities from the field:

GRASSROOTS ACTIONS: 19

GRASSTOPS ACTIONS: 5

LOBBY VISITS: 2

EVENTS: 5

EVENT ATTENDEES: 25

EARNED MEDIA: 7



Community members participate in Virginia Conservation Network's youth hunter/conservationist event (see Public Lands section) – Photo: VCN

## Last Month

### National Wildlife Federation Releases Megafires Report

Last month the National Wildlife Federation released the new report, [\*Megafires – The Growing Risk to America's Forests, Communities, and Wildlife\*](#). The report highlights how wildfires are dramatically increasing in size and number, magnifying risk for people and wildlife. The biggest elements contributing to the sharp rise in wildfires are unhealthy forest conditions, insufficient forest restoration activities, rapid climate change, and increasing housing development in high-risk and fire-prone areas. Compounding the threat, U.S. Forest Service (USFS) budget constraints limit the agency's ability to invest in the forest restoration and management needed to reduce fire risks, because USFS is spending nearly 60% of its budget combating growing megafires.

# Corn Ethanol Mandate Reform

Since the ethanol mandate in the Renewable Fuel Standard was enacted, more than 7 million acres of wildlife habitat and natural areas have been converted to crops, mostly corn for ethanol. This has led to water pollution and destruction of habitat for wildlife and important pollinators such as bees and butterflies. Fewer than five percent of native grasslands remain. This campaign's goal is to pass legislation that would fix the Renewable Fuel Standard to promote biofuels made from sources other than corn, fund habitat restoration and conservation, and provide more rigorous oversight of the EPA to prohibit the conversion of native wildlife habitat into cropland to grow corn for ethanol.

## Media

- **New Jersey** – David La Puma, director of New Jersey Audubon's Cape May Bird Observatory, wrote a blog on bird migration and habitat conversion in waterfowl breeding grounds which was published in Birdwatcher's Digest.

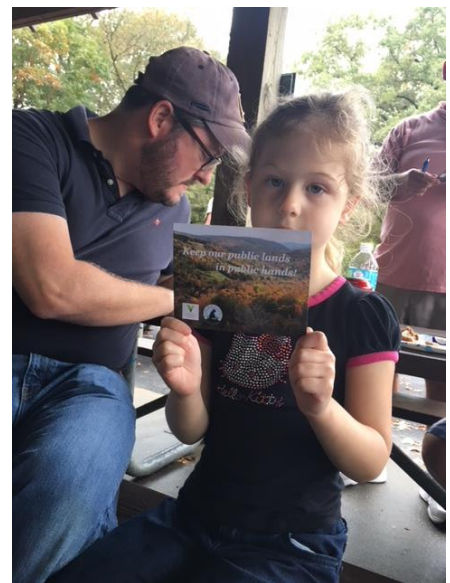
Associated Media: [Migration Sheds Light on Factors Affecting Bird Abundance](#)

# Eastern Public Lands

NWF's Eastern Public Lands Defense campaign has three goals: to block large-scale transfers of national public lands out of public ownership, to hinder any efforts to weaken the Antiquities Act, and to halt attempts to rollback existing national monument designations. Attacks on public lands threaten habitat for fish and wildlife and put our ability as Americans to connect with nature at risk. The NWF family is building a movement by engaging outdoor rec business owners and staff, sportsmen, and wildlife lovers in SC, TN, VA, WI, and WV. Through our coordinated campaign, we're send a strong message to our legislators—keep it public!

## Grassroots & Grasstops Engagement

- **Tennessee** – Tennessee Wildlife Federation featured a “share your public lands story” opportunity in their TWF fall newsletter, distributed as a hard copy to ~1,500 members. It will also be included in their upcoming electronic newsletter.
- **Virginia** – Virginia Conservation Network teamed up with Delta Waterfowl to host a youth hunter/conservationist engagement event in Chester. Children and their parents constructed wood duck nest boxes to be hung out in public lands. Wetland Biologist David Norris of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries spoke at the event about wildlife conservation and the value of public lands. Nineteen attendees signed postcards addressed to congress in support of public lands.
- **Virginia** – Virginia Conservation Network held a press conference on the National Parks Fee Increase proposal at a fly fishing outfitter in Charlottesville. Executive Director of the Shenandoah National Park Trust Susan Sherman and Albemarle Angler shop co-owner Scott Osborne were interviewed by the press, and other attendees included Albemarle Angler co-owners John Schablein and Scott Carson Oldham and fishing guide Scott



A young conservationist participates in the VCN duck nest box building event in Chester, VA. –

Osborne.

- **West Virginia** – West Virginia Rivers Coalition held a West Virginia Businesses for Public Lands meeting which included owner of Water Stone Outdoors Maura Kistler, owner of Adventures on the Gorge Paul Breuer, owner of Elk River Touring Center Gil Willis, manager of Rocky Mountain Rafts Julia Jones, and a representative from Senator Capito’s office. The discussed issues around public lands, the economic value of public lands and how to use their position in the business community to protect public lands. The meeting was held at Adventures on the Gorge in Lansing.

## Lobby Visits

- **Virginia** – Virginia Conservation Network met with Congressman McEachin’s DC office to discuss public lands issues.
- **Virginia** – Virginia Conservation Network met with Senator Kaine’s DC office to discuss public lands issues.
- **West Virginia** – West Virginia Rivers Coalition spoke over the phone with Senator Manchin’s office regarding the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge vote and the budget.



## Media

- **Virginia** – WVTF – Virginia’s Public Radio covered the Virginia Conservation Network National Parks Fee Increase press conference. Associated Media: [Park Fans Distressed by Proposed Fee Hikes](#)
- **Virginia** – WINA covered the Virginia Conservation Network National Parks Fee Increase press conference. Associated Media: [Activists and business leaders weigh in on higher park fees](#)

Conservation Network National Parks Fee Increase press conference.

Associated Media: [Concern Raised Over Increased National Park Admission Fee](#)

- **Virginia** – CBS19 covered the Virginia Conservation Network National Parks Fee Increase press conference.

Associated Media: [Businesses say potential national park fee hike will have negative impact](#)

# Climate

The central goal of the Climate Action Campaign is to prevent any attempts to slow, weaken or halt climate mitigation policy, the protection of our clean air, and the advancement of clean, renewable energy. Current threats include cuts and bad riders to the federal budget, regulatory rollbacks such as the Regulatory Accountability Act, efforts to weaken or block the EPA Clean Power Plan and EPA and Bureau of Land Management methane pollution rules, and other proposed legislation and executive orders that harm people and wildlife.

## Grassroots & Grasstops Actions

- **Pennsylvania** – PennFuture held a statewide Hurricane Sandy Five Years Later telepresser discussing extreme weather and climate change impacts. The event commemorated the fifth anniversary of Superstorm Sandy while exploring the issue of extreme storms and climate change, including insights from experts on this year's string of disastrous weather events and the Administration's response to them. Larry Schweiger, and Director of PennFuture Energy Center Rob Altenburg discussed the enormous cost of superstorms to taxpayers, and the cost of inaction on the part of the government when it comes to a lack of climate policy that addresses issues of infrastructure, rebuilding, and doing the work needed to alleviate climate change.

## Clean Water

The Clean Water For All Campaign is a coalition effort in which NWF is playing a lead role. The goals of this campaign are threefold. First, defend against federal attacks to clean water protections, whether that's pushing back on the repeal of the Clean Water Rule, defending the EPA's budget to allow for better enforcement of our clean water laws, or defending regional clean water programs in the federal budget. Second, to promote clean water infrastructure that will protect wildlife, communities, and public health. Third, through the 2018 Farm Bill, combat nutrient pollution that leads to toxic algal blooms.

The Clean Water Act is under attack in the Senate this week with a piece of legislation (S. 1129) that would weaken Clean Water Act protections and leave our waters more vulnerable to the threat of harmful aquatic invasive species. The EPA is also soliciting recommendations on what a replacement Clean Water Rule should include from now until Nov. 28<sup>th</sup>.

## Grassroots & Grasstops Engagement

- **Maine** – Natural Resources Council of Maine presented at Bates College, focusing on the Environment and the Clean Water Act, the Clean Power Plan repeal and the EPA budget.
- **Maine** – Natural Resources Council of Maine recruited George Smith, former director of the Sportsmen's Alliance of Maine, to write a column about climate change and the Clean Water Rule which was published in the Kennebec Journal.

Associated Media: [Join in the fight against climate change](#)

## Looking Ahead

### Calendar

#### NOVEMBER

Nov: Recovering America's Wildlife Act introduction expected soon!

Nov 6-17: UN Climate Change Conference in Bonn

Nov 7: Election Day 2017 (most of US)

Nov 7: Clean Water Rule Webinar - Scientific organizations and academia

Nov 10: Veterans' Day (observed)

Nov 11: Veterans' Day

Nov TBD: EPA Clean Power Plan Comment Period DEADLINE

Nov 13-14: ASMFC Menhaden Management Board meeting in Linthicum, MD

Nov 14: "We Are Still In" Climate Day of Action  
Nov 14-16: America's Grasslands Conference in Fort Worth, TX  
Nov 15: NWF release of GHG emissions data related to corn ethanol mandate  
Nov 17-27: House Recess/State Work Period  
Nov 20 - Nov 24: Senate Recess/State Work Period  
Nov 23: Thanksgiving  
Nov 21: Clean Water Rule Webinar - Open to general public  
Nov 25: DOI Sage Grouse Plan comment period DEADLINE  
Nov 28: EPA Clean Water Rule (step 2) comment period DEADLINE  
Nov 28-29: CAC Clean Power Plan

#### DECEMBER

Dec 2: Anniversary of the creation of the EPA  
Dec 5-7: DC Clean Water For All Fly-In  
Dec 8: National Flood Insurance Program authorization expires  
Dec 8: Government Funding expires  
Dec 8: Deadline for appropriations and debt ceiling  
Dec 11: Corn ethanol land conservation data release  
Dec 15: TBD: EPA Clean Power Plan repeal comment period DEADLINE  
Dec 15-31: House Recess/State Work Period  
Dec 17: Anniversary of the Clean Air Act  
Dec 18-29: Senate Recess/State Work Period  
Dec 25: Christmas

#### JANUARY

Jan 9: NWF Offshore Wind Report (Atlantic, CA, HI)

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